

## PATIENT DESIGNATED CAREGIVERS

Some patients end up returning to the hospital soon after discharge because they had not been instructed properly on their follow-up care or were unable to follow instructions. This law, the CARE (Caregiver Advise, Record, Enable) Act, requires that a hospital document a caregiver in the patient's discharge plan, designated by the patient. They must attempt to notify the caregiver of the patient's discharge, and to instruct the caregiver on any post-discharge tasks with which the patient will need assistance.

## BIG NEWS IN COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY

Student loan debt is an issue that impacts many Connecticut families. Sixty-four percent of college graduates in our state have student loan debt. This year, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to create a Student Loan Bill of Rights, which establishes an Office of the Student Loan Ombudsman. This office will regulate student loan servicers, compile data on borrower complaints, develop a financial literacy education course for students, and will help student borrowers and their parents navigate the loan process.

In addition, the Connecticut Higher Education Supplemental Loan Authority (CHESLA) took historic steps toward increasing college affordability by announcing that it will offer its lowest fixed interest rate yet at 4.95%, down from its current rate of 6.75%. This rate is also significantly lower than the Federal PLUS loan rate of 6.84%.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

CHRISTINE (ROSATI) RANDALL

PROUDLY SERVING THE 44TH HOUSE DISTRICT | KILLINGLY, PLAINFIELD



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## CAPITOL UPDATE 2015

Dear Neighbor,

The 2015 legislative session has ended and I wanted to take a moment to share some highlights from the past several months.

Democrats in the legislature approved a biennial budget package (HB 7061 and SB 1502) that protects funding to vital programs and services. The budget provides \$13 million in increased funding for nursing home workers who provide direct care to our loved ones.

We also increased funding to towns and secured significant state funding for Day Kimball Hospital. Unfortunately, some of the additional funding has been cut by the Governor due to economic uncertainty. I can assure you that restoring this funding remains a top priority. I will continue fighting for our local hospitals, understanding that they are a major employer and provide much needed access to quality care for residents of Northeast CT.

On a personal note, I have exciting news I am happy to share with you. This September I got married! I will be updating my communications to reflect my name change. During the transition, you will see my name listed as Christine (Rosati) Randall and will be able to reach me using my new or previous e-mail address.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve as your state representative and fight for Northeast Connecticut. Please don't hesitate to call or email me with your thoughts, concerns or suggestions at [Christine.Randall@cga.ct.gov](mailto:Christine.Randall@cga.ct.gov) or 800-842-8267.

Thank you for the honor of representing you.

*Christine Randall*

Christine (Rosati) Randall  
State Representative

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## DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS FOR CHILDREN

A bill that I introduced passed unanimously in both the House of Representatives and the Senate and was recently signed by Governor Malloy. HB 6579, An Act Concerning Developmental Screenings aids in identifying whether a developmental screening of a child was completed, with parental consent, allowing fewer children to slip through the cracks.

The developmental screenings are an important tool in identifying potential delays in a child's physical and mental development. Early detection increases opportunities for early intervention and improved outcomes, while reducing special education costs.



## STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA

Most students with learning disabilities also struggle with a reading disability. It's essential to identify and help these students as early as possible. This year, we directed the State Department of Education (SDE) to designate a point person who will help parents and local boards of education identify students with dyslexia and intervene with appropriate help. Up-and-coming teachers will now also be required to undergo 12 hours of preparation in effective literacy instruction using current best practices. Finally, the legislature granted the SDE an extension in their rollout of new reading assessments that will help identify students at risk for dyslexia. The additional time ensures successful implementation of an important program.

## VARIABLE ELECTRIC RATES

This year, Connecticut became the first state in the nation to protect residents from electricity providers who offer a low introductory rate that increases rapidly afterwards. The protections enacted require competitive electric suppliers to give their customers a 60-day notice before the end of their contracts. Suppliers cannot charge these customers a termination or early cancellation fee and must allow customers who want to switch to standard service the ability to do so within 72 hours. We also set up a process for Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to further investigate and take measures to completely eliminate variable electric rates when a customer's contract expires.



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## REDUCING REQUIRED TESTING IN SCHOOLS

Since the rollout of No Child Left Behind almost 15 years ago, standardized testing has come under a lot of scrutiny. One area of concern is that there are simply too many tests. For example, juniors in high school are currently required to take the SBAC exam at a time when many of them are taking the SAT or ACT college admission tests. As we work statewide and across the country to improve the use of standardized tests, the legislature took another big step forward this year by allowing schools to waive SBAC testing for any students taking these college admissions tests.

## INCREASING SERVICES AVAILABLE TO VETERANS ON STATE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

Operation Academic Support for Incoming Service (OASIS) helps members of the Armed Services receive grants and scholarships to purchase necessary school supplies when enrolling in educational programs. A new law asks for a study of how our colleges could implement the best services and practices into the OASIS program.

## BEEFING UP STUDENTS' FINANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION

To make sure high school and college students are prepared to manage their personal finances and understand the importance of maintaining a good credit score, we passed legislation to broaden the curriculum topics that must be developed by the Department of Education, Board of Regents, and the UConn Board of Trustees. The curriculum must include the topics of banking, investing, savings, and the handling of personal finances.

